



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
Charlie Battery, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 79<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery  
434<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Brigade  
Fort Sill, Oklahoma 73503-6204



Commander, Charlie Battery, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 79<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery

13 Jun 2018

Dear Family and Friends,

Greetings from the Fires Center of Excellence, Fort Sill, Oklahoma, home of the Field Artillery. My name is Captain Morgan E. Montgomery and I am the commander of Charlie Battery, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 79<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment "CHARLIE ROCK!" I am informing you that your Soldier has arrived safely and has begun Basic Combat Training here in the 434<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Brigade.

We are extremely proud your Soldier has volunteered to join a time honored profession of service to our Nation in the United States Army. The Army is fortunate to have extremely patriotic, well-qualified, and highly motivated individuals volunteer to join our team.

Over the next nine weeks your Soldier will begin the transformation from a civilian to a Soldier in the United States Army. Your Soldier will learn the basic Soldier skills that are required to fight and win on today's modern battlefield. The training will be strenuous and demanding.

The tasks your Soldier will perform develops the discipline and self-confidence necessary to be a successful Soldier in today's Army. Your Soldier will conduct physical training daily to build physical strength and conditioning and also instill teamwork, pride, and enthusiasm in themselves and their unit. Your Soldier will learn military customs, courtesies, and traditions as well as policies and procedures on how Soldiers conduct themselves as members of the military team.

Additionally, they will learn how to engage the enemy with a rifle, care for their buddy using first aid, navigate with a map and a compass, all the while immersed in an environment stressing the seven Army values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage; it is these values that shape who and what we are as Soldiers and warriors.

The cadre and Drill Sergeants who will be training your Soldier are a very dedicated group of professionals, genuinely concerned about the health, welfare, and training of each Soldier. We consider our Soldiers to be the most important asset of the Army's future.

Your Soldier had the opportunity to call home during the first week of Basic Combat Training but phone privileges will be extremely limited for the next few weeks. Later in training, your Soldier may have the privilege to use the phone at the end of weeks 3 and 6, primarily on those Sunday afternoons. The phone time will not be very long. I do encourage you to write to your Soldier. A little bit of encouragement from home goes a long way in keeping your Soldier engaged and motivated.

While packages are allowed **please do not send** medication of any kind, food items, magazines, weapons/knives, clothing, or other "contraband" items: electronics, tobacco products, and/or candy. All boxes are opened by the addressee, but checked for contraband items.

Send mail to:  
PVT/PFC/SPC (your soldier's last, first name)  
6007 Rothwell Street  
1-79<sup>th</sup> FA BN, Charlie BTRY, (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or 4<sup>th</sup>) PLT  
Fort Sill, OK 73503-6204

I highly encourage you to attend the Family Orientation meeting on **15 Aug 2018** at 6:00 p.m., Family Day activities on **16 Aug 2018** at 9:00 a.m., and Graduation on **17 Aug 2018** at 10:00 a.m. If you are unable to attend the Graduation Ceremony, Fort Sill will stream it live. The link will be provided in the Graduation Letter and will be posted on the Battery Facebook Page (search for "**Charlie Battery 1-79 Basic Combat Training**"). We will send out a detailed graduation information letter during week 6 of training. The best information is available on the Battery Facebook Page. Due to increased security levels on Fort Sill, no bags (i.e. backpacks, large hand bags, etc.) will be allowed at the Orientation, Family Day, or Graduation. The only exception is purses, which will be subject to search upon entry. You can also find information about Ft. Sill and the Lawton area at the Chamber of Commerce website: <http://www.lawtonfortsillchamber.com/index.php?pr=Lodging>. There is also great information on the 434th FA BDE website at: <http://sill-www.army.mil/434/1-79/1-79c.html>. Family and friends will have the opportunity to spend time with their Soldier after both Family Day and Graduation so please plan to spend a couple days in the local area.

**In order to receive access to Fort Sill for family day/graduation, every person attending, age 18 or older, must have a DoD identification (ID) card or a visitor's pass issued by the Fort Sill Visitor Control Center. Family members 16 and 17 years old who drive their vehicle onto Fort Sill also need a visitor's pass and a valid ID. The approved list of DoD ID cards can be found at: <http://sill-www.army.mil/vcc/approved.html>. To obtain a visitor's pass, every person age 18 and older must download a Fort Sill Form 118a at <http://sill-www.army.mil/vcc.html>. Although disclosure of information is voluntary, missing information might prevent the Visitor Center from running background checks which could be grounds for the denial of your visitor's pass. If you have a record of felony, then the Visitor Center will deny your pass request. Once the form is completed for every member in your party wanting access to Fort Sill, the completed forms need to be mailed to the Fort Sill Visitor Control Center, T6701 Sheridan Road, Fort Sill, OK 73503. To ensure that you do not have any problems during the Family and Graduation Days, it is best that the Visitor Center receives your completed form no later than the end of your Soldier's fourth week of basic training (9-13 Jul 2018) so your request can be processed. You will be able to pick up the passes anytime the Visitor Center is open (Monday-Friday, 6 a.m. thru 6 p.m. and Saturday-Sunday, 9 a.m. thru 3 p.m.). Do NOT overnight any mail to the Visitor Center since the mailing system on Fort Sill will take several days to process and distribute the mail. If you do not complete the above listed steps to receive a visitor's pass, you will have to complete the process upon arrival to Fort Sill before you can gain access. Please also remember to bring a valid ID card with you.**

The **Army Family Team Building (AFTB)** training program is an online course designed to give family members that are new to Army life a baseline of Army knowledge and resources to aid in their transition. The training is open to anyone who has access to a computer and the Internet. We highly encourage you to complete the training to learn some valuable information about the Army. As an incentive to encourage family members' participation, the Platoon with the most family members completing AFTB Levels 1, 2, and 3 will be granted **15 Extra Minutes** of cell phone time on **Sunday, 29 Jul 2018**. This is double the amount of phone time they normally receive! Instructions for the training course are below.

**Instructions:**

- (1) Sign up online through this link for AFTB Classes: <https://www.myarmyonesource.com>
- (2) Register (top right corner), click "Online Training", click Computer Based Training, on left column click on AFTB level I, II, and III Training.
- (3) Email certificate of completion to CPT Montgomery at [c179bctaftb@gmail.com](mailto:c179bctaftb@gmail.com) as proof of completion (remember to type the Soldier's name and the family member's name in the subject line when you send the email. Example PVT Smith, John completed by Smith, Jane).  
Certificates of completion need to be received NLT Friday, 27 Jul 2018 by 4 PM Central Standard Time. Quick Note: that email address is only checked for the AFTB certificates we do not check it regularly for questions. If you have questions see the phone numbers below.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Battery with any critical concerns regarding your Soldier. Just understand that we cannot give you specific information on your Soldier. We cannot confirm who you are over the phone and we will not stop your Soldier's training to come to the phone. You can ask for me, **CPT Morgan E. Montgomery** or the Battery First Sergeant, **1SG Adrian Campbell**. Our telephone number is (580) 442-1326/1358. If a true emergency arises at home, i.e. serious injury, illness, or worse, of an immediate family member (spouse, parent, in-law, sibling, or child) please call the American Red Cross (877) 272-7337 in order to quickly get the message to the unit and the Soldier.

Finally, we're on Facebook! Search for "**Charlie Battery 1-79 Basic Combat Training**". Weekly updates and some photos will be uploaded. I look forward to meeting you and hope you are able to attend your Soldier's graduation. Thank you for the support of your Soldier!

**CHARLIE ROCK!**

**PEACE THROUGH VICTORY!**

////ORIGINAL SIGNED////  
MORGAN E. MONTGOMERY  
CPT, FA  
Commanding

## **Frequently Asked Questions/Concerns**

### **-I have not heard from my Soldier in a few days.**

We try to give Soldiers an opportunity to call home on Sundays after completion of their third week (Red Phase). This is dependent on time and is a privilege, not a right. Training and administrative requirements take priority. Most Sundays, Soldiers should have an opportunity to call home. Just because you may not receive a call does not mean they didn't call someone.

### **-I have sent mail to my Soldier which they have not received / my Soldier has sent mail that has not arrived.**

The mail system for Basic training runs much slower than the typical civilian mail system. After arriving at the Post Office on Ft. Sill, mail will be picked up and delivered to our higher headquarters and eventually picked up by the Battery. This usually adds 2-3 days to the delivery time.

### **-My Soldier has not gotten paid.**

All finance issues can be resolved by the Soldier and his platoon Drill Sergeants. Following the first pay period the Drill Sergeants will identify issues with Soldiers' pay. Soldiers need to bring up issues so it can be resolved efficiently. Keep in mind that it can take up to 45 days for Soldiers to get into the pay system.

### **-How do I get tickets to Graduation / how many people can come to my Soldier's Graduation?**

The Graduation ceremony is currently scheduled for the Cache Creek Chapel Complex on Fort Sill. There are no assigned seats, so no tickets are needed. Also, there is a limit on space available, everyone is welcome to attend, but space is limited.

### **-I plan on coming to Graduation; can I get a list of hotels in the area and directions to Graduation?**

As mentioned above I will be sending out a second letter as we get closer to Graduation with pertinent information about the event. Also use the website located in this letter. **We will not make reservations for you.** Using online travel search engines is also a great way to find local hotels and rental car agencies.

### **-When will I be able to see my Soldier at Graduation time?**

There will be two opportunities to spend time with your Soldier. The day prior to Graduation is our Family Day demonstration. At the conclusion of this demonstration Soldiers are given a limited day pass to spend with their family. Again, pass is a privilege, not a right. Soldiers must remain in the Lawton/Ft. Sill area and return to the Battery by 7:00 pm. Again, following the Graduation ceremony Soldiers will be given another day pass with the same restrictions as the Family Day pass and dependent on their ship time.

### **-It's the first time my Soldier has been away and I just wanted to see how they are doing/make sure everything is okay.**

We train over 200 Soldiers each Basic Training class. The schedule is very demanding for both the trainees and the cadre training them. We truly do not have the resources or time available to provide individual updates on Soldiers. If there is an emergency or a Soldier is hospitalized we will contact their family.

### **-What if I am having trouble with the Fort Sill Visitor Control Center website?**

Please contact the Visitor Control Center for all questions relating to them. The number is (580) 442-9602. Keep in mind that they are very busy especially on Wed, Thurs, and Fri. They handle a lot of volume every week.